



# News Release

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY  
David A. Berns, Director

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Visit our DES web site at  
[www.de.state.az.us](http://www.de.state.az.us)

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## DES LAUNCHES LABOR MARKET INFORMATION WEB SITE

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PHOENIX – (October 21, 2003) The Department of Economic Security today announced the launch of a web site that will put customized labor market information at the fingertips of policymakers, business leaders, economic developers, researchers and individuals.

Workforce Informer is the culmination of two years of work by the DES Research Administration in collaboration with 22 other states through the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Federal Labor Market Information funding provided Arizona's \$90,000 investment in the initial development of the system which has yielded a \$2.3 million product that will revolutionize the way labor information is shared and used in Arizona. Eventually, Arizona users will be able to access the data available on similar sites in neighboring states.

"We envision a system where any individual, from a corporate CEO looking to expand their business to a college student exploring career options, can get the specific information they need to make career and work-related decisions," said Donald Wehbey, the chief economist at DES who worked extensively with others on the Informer project.

As a partner with the Governor's Council on Workforce Policy, DES has been the main source of labor market information to Arizona's business and economic development community for many years. However, the information provided was generally national or statewide data in static form and didn't meet the needs of many users who often need data in a dynamic format they can manipulate in order to make specific decisions.

"Web-enabled and customer friendly tools, such as the Arizona Workforce Informer, will help expedite the vision of the Arizona Workforce Connection and the Governor's Council on Workforce Policy to consolidate on-line access to labor market information and assist businesses, economic development professionals, and job seekers in making informed choices about hiring, job growth, wage rates, and other workforce development needs," said Steve Juliver, a member of the Governor's Council on Workforce Policy.

The current site has the same data previously available at DES, but with a series of new tools for customizing the information. The most appealing aspect of the new site is its versatility; it can be grown to interface with many systems and provide data in many different ways.

"Part of the reason we were so excited to launch Workforce Informer was to get feedback from the users and establish priorities for growing the system," Wehbey said. "We want users to get on the site, play with it for a while and tell us what they would like the system to be able to do."

DES Director David Berns said he is excited about the Informer and what it means for the Department's goals of integrating services for vulnerable adults and families in Arizona.

"So many of the challenges families in our communities face are directly related to poverty," Berns said. "With the wealth of census and economic data available on Informer, we can do a better job of planning for service delivery, finding people jobs,

ensuring that the supports exist to help them keep jobs and providing information and services to those who are still looking for work and eventually, employers looking to hire people.”

(more)

ADD ONE  
Workforce Informer  
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Berns isn't the only one singing the Informer's praises. Prior to the launch, DES had several long-time users test the site and give their opinion. Some of their responses were:

“I have found the Workforce Informer to be very useful. I like having all of the DES workforce/economic data located in one area. The articles are there, as well as the data so that I may perform my own analysis. The data download process is quite simple, and allows me to update my time series as I have time available. This is a great step forward in data and information dissemination.”

**Norman C. Selover, Principal Economist**

***Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting***

“Arizona Workforce Informer is impressive. It provides access to current as well as historical data. It also provides current inflation estimates, population estimates, and economic forecasts. Links to federal government statistical agencies also are included. The site is well designed and easy to navigate. It is also appealing to the eye and functional. The search feature and glossary are nice additions. The Workforce Informer will continue to be our first stop as we collect data each month for our research efforts.”

**Marshall J. Vest, Director, Economic and Business Research**

***University of Arizona, Eller College of Business***

“The new site improves the range of information available and the presentation of that information. It is much easier to navigate for people who are unfamiliar with the data. The site also allows people to access data after answering a series of guided questions rather than having them look in a series of Excel files, but it still makes the Excel files accessible for those of us who need most of the data in one place.”

**Tracy L. Clark, Associate Director and Senior Research Economist**

***Bank One Economic Outlook Center***

The Workforce Informer can be accessed at: <http://www.workforce.az.gov/>